

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

As stated above, Applicants elect, Group I, claims 1-5, drawn to a method for cleaning torches, for further prosecution and respectfully traverse the requirement for restriction for the following reasons:

It is respectfully submitted that there is sufficient unity between the method of cleaning torches recited in Group I and the apparatus for cleaning torches recited in Group II as both promote rapid and automatic cleaning especially suitable for welding robot applications to warrant examination in a single patent application. According to Applicants' invention, the welding torch is substantially in the same position during the application of the cleaning liquid or wetting liquid and the subsequent exposure to an electromagnetic field. Both the method claims (claims 1-5) as well as the device claims (claims 6-52) are directed to this concept.

In addition, it is believed that any search for the method for cleaning torches embodied in Group I would necessarily include a search for the apparatus for cleaning torches embodied

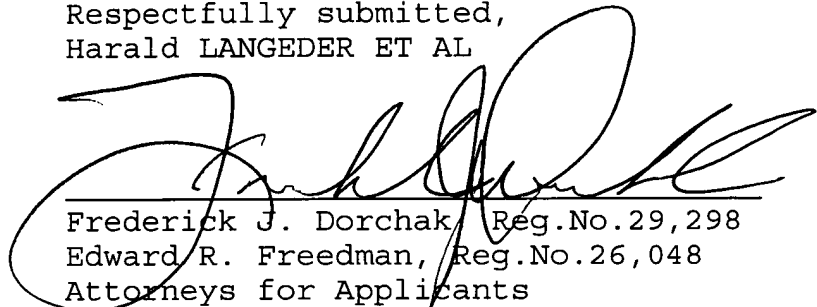
in the remaining group. Thus, the simultaneous search for both groups is believed not to constitute an unreasonable search for the Patent Examiner.

In addition, it is believed that the objectives of streamlined examination and compact prosecution would be promoted if a search were conducted simultaneously for both groups. Also, the necessity of filing multiple patent applications in this case does not serve to promote the public interest because of the extra expense that is involved, in filing fees and examination costs, as well as the burden upon the public, due to the necessity of searching through a multiplicity of patent files in order to find the complete range of the subject matter claimed in several different patents that could otherwise be found in one issued patent only.

Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application for the non-elected group.

For all these reasons, it is respectfully requested that the restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. 121 be withdrawn and that an action on the merits of all the claims be rendered.

Respectfully submitted,
Harald LANGEDER ET AL

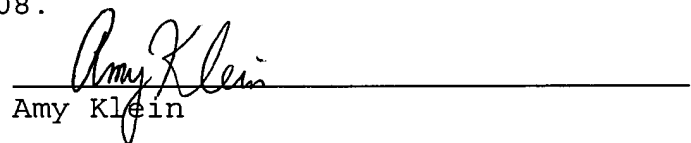


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